

REMARKS

The Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter of claims 15, 16, 21 and 26 in the Advisory Action dated September 17, 2003 is noted with appreciation.

Claims 6-7, 9, 11-14, 16-17, 21 and 35-46 and 48-57 are pending in the application. Claim 6 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 15. Allowable claim 16 and claim 37 have been rewritten in independent form. Claim 35 has been amended to further define the claimed invention over the applied art of record. Claims 48-57 have been added to provide Applicants with the scope of protection to which they are believed entitled. No new matter has been introduced through the foregoing amendments.

Claims 6-7, 9, 11-14, 16-17, 21 including the indicated allowable subject matter and should be allowed.

Independent claim 35 has been amended to overcome the anticipatory rejections relying on *Harper*.

Independent claim 35 is not anticipated by *Harper*, because the reference fails to teach or disclose the newly added limitation of at least one of said cutting lines **extending continuously from one side to another side of the substrate**, thereby allowing said substrate to be cut along said at least one cutting line without cutting the cut-resistant anti-slip coating. As can be seen in FIGs. 3-4 of *Harper*, "cutting lines" 32 do not extend in the presently claimed manner.

Independent claim 35 is not anticipated by *Robbins* notwithstanding the anticipatory rejection manifested in paragraph 8 of the Final Office Action, because the reference *as applied by the Examiner* fails to teach or disclose the claimed **uncoated, cutting lines on the working surface of said substrate**. The Examiner regarded release paper 36 as the claimed substrate and cleats 28 as the claimed coating. As can be seen in FIGs. 3-4 of *Robbins*, "coating" 28 covers the

entire lower surface of “substrate” 36 and does not define *uncoated*, cutting lines on the working surface of “substrate” 36, as presently claimed. The 35 U.S.C. 102(b) rejection of claim 35 as being anticipated by *Robbins* is therefore erroneous and should be withdrawn.

Independent claim 35 is not obvious over *Van Schoyck* in view of *Robbins* because the references are not combinable for the reasons advanced in the first and second full paragraphs on page 12 of the Amendment filed February 19, 2003. The Examiner did not point out why Applicants’ arguments are not persuasive. In addition, it is unclear where the Examiner’s suggestion or motivation to combine (the last two lines of paragraph 12 of the Final Office Action) might be found, i.e., in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available in the art. Clarification is respectfully requested. Finally, *Van Schoyck* in view of *Robbins* clearly fails to teach or disclose at least one of said cutting lines **extending continuously** in the presently claimed manner. As can be seen in FIG. 5 of *Robbins*, “cutting line” 44 is not continuous.

Amended independent claim 35 is therefore patentable over the applied art of record. Claims 36, 38-46 depend from claim 35, and are considered patentable at least for the reason advanced with respect to amended claim 35.

As to claims 43-45, the applied references fail to disclose, teach or suggest the claimed **top basin** formed over said coating and said cutting lines. The Examiner did not specify where in the applied references the claim feature might be disclosed or suggested. Clarification is respectfully requested.

Independent claim 37 is not anticipated by *Robbins* for the reasons advanced above with respect to claim 35.

Independent claim 37 is not anticipated by *Harper* because the reference fails to teach or disclose at least two of said cutting lines that extend continuously and **intersect** each other. The Examiner in the Advisory Action simply stated that the anticipatory rejections of claim 37 are

sustained. Applicants respectfully disagree, and request further clarification as to how the above highlighted limitation of claim 37 may be disclosed by *Harper*.

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 37 is patentable over the applied art of record. Claim 48 depends from claim 37, and are considered patentable at least for the reason advanced with respect to claim 37.

New independent claim 49 is patentable over the applied references because the reference fail to disclose, teach or suggest the claimed **uncoated region that is devoid of said second material and extends continuously from one side to another side of the substrate**, thereby defining a uncoated, cutting line along which said substrate can be cut without cutting the cut-resistant anti-slip coating. In particular, *Robbins* does not have a uncoated region whereas *Harper* does not have a uncoated region that extends continuously from one side to another side of the substrate.

Claims 50-57 depend from claim 49, and are considered patentable at least for the reason advanced with respect to claim 49. Claims 50-57 are also patentable on their own merits since these claims recite other features of the invention neither disclosed, taught nor suggested by the applied art, as will be apparent to the Examiner upon reviewing these claims.

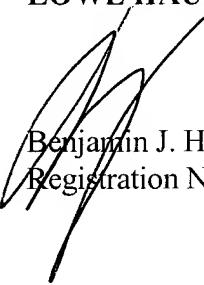
Each of the Examiner's rejections has been traversed/overcome. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Early and favorable indication of allowance is courteously solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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